

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SOUTHERN DIVISION

CIVIL ACTION NO. 7:15-cv-00138-FL

OSTERMAN & COMPANY, INC. )  
vs. )  
Plaintiff, )      **STIPULATED PROTECTIVE ORDER**  
              )      **REGARDING HIGHLY SENSITIVE OR**  
DAVID FRANCO, )      **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**  
Defendant. )      **AND/OR TRADE SECRETS**

**I. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS**

Disclosure and discovery in this action are likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

1. **Challenging Party:** a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation of information or items under this Order.
2. **“CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items:** information (regardless of how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualifies for protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c).
3. **Counsel:** Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their support staff).

4.     **Designating Party:** a Party or Non-Party that designates information or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY”

5.     **Disclosure or Discovery Material:** all items or information, regardless of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

6.     **Expert:** a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter pertinent to the litigation who (1) has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as an expert witness or as a consultant in this action, (2) is not a past or current employee of a Party or of a Party’s competitor, and (3) at the time of retention, is not anticipated to become an employee of a Party or of a Party’s competitor.

7.     **“HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” Information or Items:** extremely sensitive “Confidential Information or Items,” disclosure of which to another Party or Non-Party would create a substantial risk of serious harm that could not be avoided by less restrictive means.

8.     **House Counsel:** attorneys who are employees of a party to this action. House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside counsel.

9.     **Non-Party:** any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

10.    **Outside Counsel of Record:** attorneys who are not employees of a party to this action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this action and have appeared in this

action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm which has appeared on behalf of that party.

11. **Party:** any party to this action, including all of its officers, directors, employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their support staffs).

12. **Producing Party:** a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or Discovery Material in this action.

13. **Professional Vendors:** persons or entities that provide litigation support services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium) and their employees and subcontractors.

14. **Protected Material:** any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is designated as “CONFIDENTIAL,” or as “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY.”

15. **Receiving Party:** a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material from a Producing Party.

### **III. SCOPE**

The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

### **III. DURATION**

Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations imposed by this Order shall remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees otherwise in writing or a court

order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall be deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this action, with or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and exhaustion of all appeals, re-hearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this action, including the time limits for filing any motions or applications for extension of time pursuant to applicable law.

#### **IV. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL**

Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that qualifies under the appropriate standards. To the extent it is practical to do so, the Designating Party must designate for protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written communications that qualify – so that other portions of the material, documents, items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

1) **Manner and Timing of Designations.** Except as otherwise provided in this Order or as otherwise stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or produced. Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

- a) **Documents.** For documents (e.g., paper or electronic documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial proceedings), the Producing Party shall affix the legend “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” and must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins), and must specify, for each portion, the level of protection being asserted.

b) **Testimony.** For testimony given in deposition or in other pretrial or trial proceedings, the Designating Party shall identify on the record, before the close of the deposition, hearing, or other proceeding, all protected testimony and specify the level of protection being asserted. When it is impractical to identify separately each portion of testimony that is entitled to protection and it appears that substantial portions of the testimony may qualify for protection, the Designating Party may invoke on the record (before the deposition, hearing, or other proceeding is concluded) a right to have up to 10 days to identify the specific portions of the testimony as to which protection is sought and to specify the level of protection being asserted. Only those portions of the testimony that are appropriately designated for protection within the 10 days shall be covered by the provisions of this Stipulated Protective Order. Alternatively, a Designating Party may specify, at the deposition or up to 10 days afterwards if that period is properly invoked, that the entire transcript shall be treated as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY.” The use of a document as an exhibit at a deposition shall not in any way affect its designation as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY.”

c) **Transcripts.** Transcripts containing Protected Material shall have an obvious legend on the title page that the transcript contains Protected Material, and the title page shall be followed by a list of all pages (including line numbers as appropriate) that have been designated as Protected Material and the level of protection being asserted by the Designating Party. The Designating Party shall inform the court reporter of these requirements. Any transcript that is prepared before the expiration of a 10-day period for

designation shall be treated during that period as if it had been designated “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” in its entirety unless otherwise agreed. After the expiration of that period, the transcript shall be treated only as actually designated.

d) **Other evidence.** For information produced in some form other than documentary and for any other tangible items, the Producing Party shall affix in a prominent place on the exterior of the container or containers in which the information or item is stored the legend “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY.” If only a portion or portions of the information or item warrant protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected portion(s) and specify the level of protection being asserted.

2) **Inadvertent Failures to Designate.** If corrected within five days of discovery, an inadvertent failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material. Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

## V. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

1) **Timing of Challenges.** Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a designation of confidentiality at any time. Unless a prompt challenge to a Designating Party’s confidentiality designation is necessary to avoid foreseeable, substantial unfairness, unnecessary economic burdens, or a significant disruption or delay of the litigation, a Party does not waive its right to challenge a confidentiality designation by electing not to mount a challenge promptly after the original designation is disclosed.

2)     **Meet and Confer.** The Challenging Party shall initiate the dispute resolution process by providing written notice of each designation it is challenging and describing the basis for each challenge. The parties shall attempt to resolve each challenge in good faith and must begin the process by conferring directly within 2 days after the date of service of notice. In conferring, the Challenging Party must explain the basis for its belief that the confidentiality designation was not proper and must give the Designating Party an opportunity to review the designated material, to reconsider the circumstances, and, if no change in designation is offered, to explain the basis for the chosen designation. A Challenging Party may proceed to the next stage of the challenge process only if it has engaged in this meet and confer process first or establishes that the Designating Party is unwilling to participate in the meet and confer process in a timely manner.

3)     **Judicial Intervention.** If the Parties cannot resolve a challenge without court intervention, the Designating Party may file and serve a motion to retain confidentiality under Eastern District of North Carolina Local Rule 7 within 3 days after the initial notice of challenge or within 3 days after the parties agreeing that the meet and confer process will not resolve their dispute, whichever is earlier. Each such motion must be accompanied by a statement affirming that the movant has complied with the meet and confer requirements imposed in the preceding paragraph. The Challenging Party may file a motion challenging a confidentiality designation at any time if there is good cause for doing so, including a challenge to the designation of a deposition transcript or any portions thereof. Any motion brought pursuant to this provision must be accompanied by a statement affirming that the movant has complied with the meet and confer requirements imposed by the preceding paragraph. The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on the Designating Party. All parties shall continue to afford the

material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing Party's designation until the court rules on the challenge.

## **VI. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL**

1) **Basic Principles.** A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this case. Such Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the conditions described in this Order. When the litigation has been terminated, a Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of Section XII, below (FINAL DISPOSITION). Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons authorized under this Order.

2) **Disclosure of “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items.** Unless otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated “CONFIDENTIAL” only to:

- a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this action, as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for this litigation and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A;
- b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);
- c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

- d) the court and its personnel;
- e) court reporters and their staff, professional jury or trial consultants, and Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);
- f) during their depositions, witnesses in the action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material must be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order.
- g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information.

3) **Disclosure of “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY”**

**Information or Items.** Unless otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” only to:

- a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this action, as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for this litigation and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A;
- b) Experts of the Receiving Party (1) to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation, and (2) who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A).

- c) the court and its personnel;
- d) court reporters and their staff, professional jury or trial consultants, and Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this litigation and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A); and
- e) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information.

## **VII. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED IN OTHER LITIGATION**

1. If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” that Party must:
  - a. promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification shall include a copy of the subpoena or court order;
  - b. promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and
  - c. cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

2. If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this action as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY” before a determination by the court from which the subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and

expense of seeking protection in that court of its confidential material – and nothing in these provisions should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this action to disobey a lawful directive from another court.

### **VIII. A NON-PARTY'S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION**

1. The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Non-Party in this action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL” or “HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL – ATTORNEYS’ EYES ONLY.” Such information produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

2. In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to produce a Non-Party’s confidential information in its possession, and the Party is subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party’s confidential information, then the Party shall:

- a. promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement with a Non-Party;
- b. promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated Protective Order in this litigation, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably specific description of the information requested; and
- c. make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-Party.

3. If the Non-Party fails to object or seek a protective order from this court within 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may produce the Non-Party’s confidential information responsive to the discovery request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall not produce any information in its

possession or control that is subject to the confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court. Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in this court of its Protected Material.

## **IX. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL**

If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order, and (d) request such person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

## **X. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE PROTECTED MATERIAL**

When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection, the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted to the court.

## **XI. MISCELLANEOUS**

1. **Right to Further Relief.** Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any person to seek its modification by the court in the future.
2. **Right to Assert Other Objections.** By stipulating to the entry of this Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.
3. **Filing Protected Material.** Without written permission from the Designating Party or a court order secured after appropriate notice to all interested persons, a Party may not file in the public record in this action any Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any Protected Material must comply with EDNC LR 79.2. Protected Material may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific Protected Material at issue. Pursuant to EDNC LR 79.2 a sealing order will issue only upon a request establishing that the Protected Material at issue is privileged, protectable as a trade secret, or otherwise entitled to protection under the law.

## **XII. FINAL DISPOSITION**

Within 60 days after the final disposition of this action, as defined in paragraph III, each Receiving Party must return all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this subdivision, “all Protected Material” includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person or entity, to the

Designating Party) by the 60-day deadline that (1) identifies (by category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material.

IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

DATED: 8/11/2015

Attorneys for Plaintiff

DATED: 8/11/2015

Attorneys for Defendant

PURSUANT TO STIPULATION, IT IS SO ORDERED.

DATED: August 12, 2015



Hon. Louise W. Flanagan  
United States District Court Judge